

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 12689 241225Z

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ACTION AF-06

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2534

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

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AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 12689

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AO, DM, NI, TO

SUBJ: MEETING BETWEEN MUHAMMED AND EYADEMA

REF : COTONOU 1945; COTONOU 1867;

SUMMARY: TOGOLESE PRESIDENT EYADEMA MADE UNANNOUNCED ONE DAY VISIT TO LAGOS DECEMBER 22, HELD TALKS WITH NIGERIAN HEAD OF STATE MUHAMMED. AMID REAFFIRMATIONS OF FAITH IN ECOWAS, THE TWO LEADERS AGREED "TAKE FURTHER STEPS" TOWARDS QUICK SETTLEMENT OF BENIN-TOGO BORDER CLOSURE "IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE." ON ANGOLA, EYADEMA AND MUHAMMED CONDEMNED SOUTH AFRICAN INTERVENTION SUPPORTED BY "INTERNATIONAL IMPERIALISM." MEANING OF MEETING MAY BE THAT NIGERIA AND TOGO INTEND PUT SQUEEZE ON BENIN END BORDER FARCE SOONEST. END SUMMARY.

1. TOGOLESE PRESIDENT EYADEMA, ACCOMPANIED BY "SOME" OF HIS MINISTERS, FLEW INTO IKEJA AIRPORT 0900, DECEMBER 22, WAS MET BY
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PAGE 02 LAGOS 12689 241225Z

EXTAFF COMMISSIONER GARBA, TAKEN TO DODAN BARRACKS FOR TALKS WITH

HEAD OF STATE MUHAMMED. IT WAS "UNDERSTOOD" THAT TOGOLESE MINISTERS WERE ALSO HOLDING TALKS WITH THEIR NIGERIAN COUNTERPARTS. MEETING APPARENTLY REQUESTED IN HASTE WITH LITTLE COORDINATION: CHIEF OF STAFF OBASANJO WENT TO AIRPORT DECEMBER 19 MEET EYADEMA, BUT HE DID NOT SHOW UP.

2. ACCORDING TO COMMUNIQUE TWO LEADERS REAFFIRMED THEIR FAITH IN ECOWAS, AND "STRONGLY" APPEALED TO STATES IN SUBREGION WHICH HAVE NOT YET RATIFIED ECOWAS TREATY TO DO SO. THEY "EXAMINED" BENIN-TOGO BORDER CLOSURE PROBLEM "AND ITS EFFECT ON THE FRATERNAL RELATIONS WHICH HAVE ALWAYS EXISTED AMONG THE COUNTRIES WITHIN THE SUBREGION," AGREEING "IN THE SPIRIT OF BROTHERHOOD AND ECOWAS" TAKE "FURTHER STEPS" TOWARDS QUICK SETTLEMENT OF PROBLEM "IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE."

3. ON ANGOLA, MUHAMMED REPEATED CALL FOR AFRICAN UNITY, DECLARED APARTHEID WAS NUMBER ONE ENEMY OF AFRICA AND THAT EVERYTHING SHOULD BE DONE TO CONTAIN SPREAD OF THIS "DISEASE." TWO HEADS OF STATE CONDEMNED SOUTH AFRICAN INTERVENTION, "DREW ATTENTION" TO DANGER POSED FOR ALL AFRICANS BY "SUCH AGGRESSION SUPPORTED BY INTERNATIONAL IMPERIALISM AIMED AT DIVIDING AFRICA." ON HIS OWN LATER AT AIRPORT NEWS CONFERENCE, EYADEMA TOOK A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT LINE, REGRETTING THAT THREE ANGOLAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS COULD NOT AGREE TO FORM GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY
X
"IF THEY HAD DONE THAT, THE WORLD POWERS COULD NOT HAVE EXPLOITED THE SITUATION."

4. ANSWERING REPORTER'S QUESTION ON TOGO'S STAND OVER SENEGAL'S THREAT BOYCOTT BLACK ARTS FESTIVAL IF ARABS ALLOWED PARTICIPATE IN FESTAC COLLOQUIUM, EYADEMA SAID HE AND HIS CABINET WOULD "THRASH OUT" ISSUE SHORTLY AND "MAKE OUR VIEWS KNOWN."

4. COMMENT: IT APPEARS NIGERIAN AND TOGOLESE HEADS OF STATE MET ON SOMEWHAT URGENT BASIS DISCUSS WHAT TO DO ABOUT PROTRACTED CLOSURE OF TOGO-BENIN BORDER BY THEIR EGREGIOUS COLLEAGUE KEREKOU. STATEMENT THAT THEY WILL DO SOMETHING TO SOLVE PROBLEM IN "VERY NEAR FUTURE" GIVES HINT THAT TOGO MAY HAVE ENLISTED NIGERIA JOIN IN MAKING STRONG APPROACH TO KEREKOU CALLING FOR END TO BORDER CLOSURE.
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PAGE 03 LAGOS 12689 241225Z

5. RHETORIC ON ANGOLA IS BECOMING STANDARD FEATURE OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY MUHAMMED. EYADEMA AVOIDED ENDORSEMENT OF NIGERIAN POSITION ON ANGOLA BY STICKING TO NONCOMMITTAL PLATITUDES.
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